



**National Indian Education Association**

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**NIEA RESOLUTION #04-04**

**TITLE: Respectfully Requesting Congress to Introduce Federal Legislation  
Safeguarding the Right of Public Schools Serving Indian Country to Teach Native  
American Languages, Including Offering Immersion Schools and Dual Language  
Instruction Programs**

**WHEREAS**, the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) was established in 1969 for the purpose of advocating, planning, and promoting the unique and special educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; and

**WHEREAS**, NIEA as the largest national Indian organization of American Indians, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian educators, administrators, parents, and students in the United States, provides a forum to discuss and act upon issues affecting the education of Indian and Native people; and

**WHEREAS**, through its unique relationship with Indian nations and tribes, the federal government has established programs and resources to meet the educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiians, residing on and off their reserved or non-reserved homelands; and

**WHEREAS**, Congress has passed the *Native American Languages Act* (25 U.S.C. 2901 et seq) declares the policy of the United States is to “encourage and support the use of Native American languages as a medium of instruction” and further states “the right of Native Americans to express themselves through the use of Native American Languages shall not be restricted in any public proceeding, including publicly supported education programs”; and

**WHEREAS**, many public school districts serving Indian students on Indian lands rely on Federal funding such as Title I, III and VII to provide quality dual and immersion Native American language education programs to enhance student achievement; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 23, 2004, the President issued a Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies in which he “reiterated my Administration's adherence to a government-to-government relationship and support for tribal sovereignty” as expressed in Executive Order 13175, entitled *Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments*; and

**WHEREAS**, on April 30, 2004, the President issued Executive Order 13336 “to assist American Indian and Alaska Native students in meeting the challenging student

academic standards of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (Public Law 107-110) in a manner that is consistent with tribal traditions, languages, and cultures”; and

**WHEREAS**, “English for the Children,” a “grassroots” organization funded by Ron Untz, a wealthy California entrepreneur, continues to push for State English only legislation throughout the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, State English laws are in direct conflict with Federal laws and policies and will undermine long term efforts by American Indian communities and governments to preserve and revitalize native languages as an essential component to tribal education and sovereignty.

**NOW THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED**, that the National Indian Education Association does hereby respectfully request Congress to introduce Federal legislation safeguarding the right of public schools serving Indian Country to teach Native American languages, including offering immersion schools and dual language instruction programs.

Submitted by Theresa Galvan, Navajo Nation, President, Board of Education, Window Rock Unified School District

#### **CERTIFICATION**

I do hereby certify that the forgoing resolution was duly considered and passed by the NIEA Board of Directors at its October 28-31, 2004 meeting in Phoenix, Arizona at which a quorum was present.



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**David Beaulieu, Ph.D., President (2004-2005)**  
**National Indian Education Association**